

Cabinet

versary of the Birth of
Abraham Lincoln

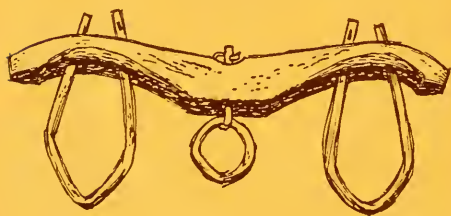


LINCOLN
CENTENNIAL ASSOCIATION
ADDRESSES

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ADDRESSES

*Delivered
At The
Celebration of*

THE ONE HUNDRED
AND FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY

of the birth of

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
Lincoln Centennial Association

At The
State Armoury, in Springfield,
Illinois, on the *twelfth day*
of February, nineteen hundred
and fourteen.

SPRINGFIELD
Printed for the Association

The Lincoln Centennial Association

Incorporated under the Laws of Illinois

OBJECT: *"To properly observe the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln; to preserve to posterity the memory of his words and works, and to stimulate the patriotism of the youth of the land by appropriate annual exercises."*

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THE Right Honorable James Bryce, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from Great Britain; the Honorable J. J. Jusserand, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the French Republic; the late Jonathan P. Dolliver, former United States Senator for Iowa; the Honorable William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State; the Honorable Charles S. Deneen, former Governor of Illinois; Dr. Booker T. Washington, of the Tuskegee Institute; the Honorable William Howard Taft, former President of the United States; the Honorable Martin W. Littleton, former member of Congress from New

York; the Honorable Henry Cabot Lodge, United States Senator from Massachusetts; the Honorable Frank B. Willis, member of Congress for Ohio; Count J. Von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador to the United States; the Honorable Joseph W. Bailey, former United States Senator for Texas.





Honorable J O. Humphrey, *The*
President of the Association
made the following

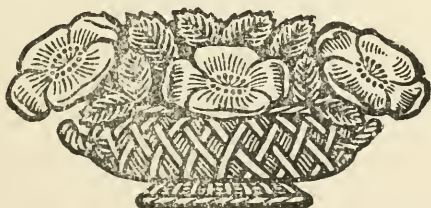
Introductory Remarks



HE rolling centuries have occasionally produced a man who dwarfs the remainder of the human race—a man of elemental largeness, as open as the prairie and clean as the wind that follows up the rain.

For the most part, he is clothed with a certain lank grace which the Gods deny to other men. Whatever his theme, he is always a voice crying in the wilderness. To this man

the people always listen. Yea, though he hide himself, they will find him and come to him on their knees. Such a man was Abraham Lincoln. As Antaeus drew strength from the earth, so Lincoln the first to spring up from prairie richness drew from the people. All too early is it yet to take the measure of his greatness. Still while less than a half century from him, literature is swelling in a billowy tide around the name of Lincoln.





The President

of the Association, Introducing

Senator Robinson



THE best endorsement any man can have is the endorsement of those who know him best. When a man still clothed with evidences of youthful vigor has been selected by his people as a representative in Congress, as Governor of his state, and as a Senator of the United States, we assume that he has been tested and not found wanting. Arkansas, the awakening giant of the middle south, has sent her brilliant son to voice the tribute of the southland to the enduring fame of Lincoln. Gentlemen, Senator Robinson.



Lincoln—A Tribute From The South

*The Address Delivered by the
Honorable JOSEPH T. ROBINSON
United States Senator from Arkansas*



ALLED by the courtesy of the Lincoln Memorial Association to speak on this anniversary of the birth of Mr. Lincoln, I am awed and inspired by the surroundings. Springfield was the home of Mr. Lincoln throughout his public career. It was the center of the political conflicts which he

waged—conflicts that produced the New Republic founded on universal Freedom and the perpetual union of the states. Here lie his remains, his memory cherished by old friends, his fame secure in the love and gratitude of a reunited country. May I assume to contribute to these proceedings a message from the present-day South, the heartfelt tribute of all her people?

When the spirit of revenge had seized the souls of many then in power; when the South lay at the feet of the union armies; when the multitudes were crying “Hang the rebels!” and “Little Tad”, God bless his memory, said “No; let’s not hang them; let’s hang on to them”, Mr. Lincoln declared “Tad is right; let’s hang on to them; not hang them”. Thus was epitomized the policy pursued in the restoration of the seceding states. Thus was exemplified the resolute mercy of him whom

the South had hated, but who, unresentfully, stood as a "pillar of cloud by day and fire by night" between what remained of her civilization and destruction. It is for this magnanimous service that the South reverently joins the North in celebrating this occasion; commissions me to bring a white rose plucked by the daughter of a Confederate soldier from a garden blooming in the heart of Dixie. If Mr. Lincoln were now alive there is not a home in all the South that would not give him joyous welcome. The surviving followers of the dauntless Lee, untitled knights in grey, would combine with the scattered fragments of Grant's legion to form his guard of honor.

The predominance of the commonplace in Mr. Lincoln's nature colors his life with somber pathos. His youth, his experience as a lawyer, the debates with Douglas, and his administration as President during the Civil

War, comprise the important phases of his career, and excite interest and amazement.

THE HARDSHIPS OF HIS YOUTH

Little is known of Mr. Lincoln's first years spent in the backwoods of Kentucky. Scant is the tale which biographers tell of his unrequited toil when a lad in Indiana. The humility of his birth, recollections of an improvident father and an unfortunate, sorrowful mother, followed him through life and tempered his soul with tolerance for frailties and sympathy for sufferings.

Poor Nancy Hanks! For every joy life brought to you, there came a thousand woes! For every day of calm and sun, a year of storm and gloom! Into your grave unspoken went the story of your sorrow and sufferings. Yours was a life of obscurity. To your son was transmitted a heritage of fellowship for com-

mon people, a capacity for mighty duties never once neglected or forgotten. The hardships of humble birth, poverty and toil, gave a color to the life of Mr. Lincoln which never faded, stored in his mind a knowledge of common things, and a familiarity with the trivial achievements and weighty cares of the humble.

LINCOLN THE LAWYER AND LOCAL POLITICIAN

When and how Mr. Lincoln became inspired with the ambition to be a lawyer is not well known. His services in the Black Hawk War were inconspicuous and were the subject of ridicule by him. They seem, however, to have formed the basis of a political ambition, for in 1832, immediately following his brief military experience, he became a candidate for the Illinois legislature from Sangamon County on a platform advocating extensive internal improvements, general education and the pass-

age of a usury law. Defeated, he contemplated becoming a blacksmith, but decided to form a partnership with one Berry for the sale of merchandise. This venture proved an utter failure and left him embarrassed by debts. As a merchant Mr. Lincoln manifested neither diligence nor ability. While engaged as a storekeeper, he gave attention to the study of law, having found, as tradition says, a copy of Blackstone's Commentaries in a barrel. In 1833 he became postmaster at New Salem, and, we are told, distributed the mail from his hat to patrons of the office, as he chanced to meet them on the streets. In 1834, after some experience as a deputy surveyor, he became a member of the state Legislature, was re-elected and became identified with "The Long Nine", a cabal which controlled the general assembly, and involved the state in questionable schemes. He was re-elected to the legislature

in 1838 and again in 1840, becoming the Whig candidate for speaker. He seemed unfitted for the duties which his legislative committee assignments required, having been appointed to the Committee on Accounts and Expenditures in the first session and afterwards to the Committee on Finance. His legislative experience as a whole was not especially meritorious, certainly not remarkable. The same is true of his career in Congress, which was limited to one term and began in December, 1847. He delivered, however, in the House of Representatives, a speech on the famous "Spott Resolutions" far superior to anything he ever said in the Illinois legislature.

During all these years he was practicing law and developing a knowledge of human nature which was to serve him well in the vital period of his life. Mr. Lincoln was a natural advocate, slow of movement, cautious in

speech, forceful, analytical, and logical in argument. He refused to champion corrupt and unjust causes, and thus acquired a power before juries that made him almost invincible. His study of the law was limited to the preparation of his cases. He paid little attention to the collection of fees, kept no books, and was withal an original type of lawyer.

THE DEBATES WITH DOUGLAS

It was not, however, until the slavery question had become acute and Mr. Lincoln had met "The Little Giant", then, perhaps the foremost orator in the United States Senate, on the platform in debate, that his remarkable powers became apparent. He had sought to be appointed Commissioner of the General Land Office, and had been disappointed. He had been tendered the governorship of Oregon Territory and had refused it. His practice as

a lawyer, together with his service in the Illinois legislature and in Congress, had given him valuable training for the memorable debates with Douglas which resulted in the most far-reaching event of the times, the abolition of slavery.

The debate hinged upon the power and duty of Congress to prevent the extension of slavery. It did not involve or contemplate the abolition of slavery where it already existed. Mr. Douglas advocated the popular system of submitting the issue to the state concerned. Mr. Lincoln championed the forces that opposed the extension of slavery and denounced the institution as immoral and at variance with the fundamental theories of our government. He succeeded in dividing the Democratic party. While Mr. Douglas was re-elected to the Senate, Mr. Lincoln made an issue which challenged the patriotism and involved the prop-

erty interests of the nation. It is doubtful whether he expected or desired the prominence which his debates with Douglas brought to him. His speeches in this campaign, the address at Cooper Union—all his speeches on the slavery question—had a peculiar quality. They were not brilliant. The first impression they made, unlike the speeches by Mr. Douglas, increased in power, so that what first appeared little more than an ordinary effort, expanded in influence until it became national in its effects. Reading these debates at this distant day, one is not surprised at the effects of Mr. Lincoln's speeches. They were the terse epigrammatic expressions of a mind charged with thought; of a conscience inspired by duty, and, most of all, so closely in sympathy with the trend of the times as to seem to lead rather than to follow it.

AT THE HEAD OF THE NATION

These debates made Mr. Lincoln the nominee of the Republican party for President in 1860, prevented the election of Mr. Douglas to that high office, and called Mr. Lincoln to the Chief Magistracy of the nation to meet the gravest responsibilities any President has encountered. It is difficult now to realize his embarrassments and burdens. While the fires of rebellion were smouldering in every southern state, and one after another was passing secession ordinances, many northern citizens, despising Mr. Lincoln, withheld their confidence, and secretly or openly encouraged the enemies of his administration. Mr. Lincoln instantly grasped the portentous issue. He realized that the union was in jeopardy. Assembling a cabinet of political rivals, he sought to harmonize conflicting factions by forcing

to the front and keeping there, the necessity for preserving the union at all hazards. No man ever had greater opportunities to blunder or better justification for error. Yet, viewed even in the light of the present, his administrations were free from important mistakes. More than this. Attributable to his caution, the government displayed a consistency throughout the war that seems well nigh marvelous. When Fort Sumter fell, Great Britain, in effect, promptly recognized the belligerency of the Confederacy. Seward lost his temper, and prepared a message to the American minister at the Court of St. James calculated to produce an open rupture with that government and probably to strain relations with other European powers. Mr. Lincoln kept his head; he never lost it. By so editing Mr. Seward's message that it became inoffensive, yet retained its force, amicable relations

were preserved with Great Britain, and a better understanding brought about.

EMANCIPATION

The two masterful achievements which glorify the name of Mr. Lincoln are the preservation, or rather the re-establishment of the Union on a permanent basis, and the emancipation of the slaves.

When General Fremont and General Hunter issued military orders freeing the slaves, Mr. Lincoln revoked them because he did not believe that emancipation had become a military necessity, and because of the strong sentiment at the north into converting the war for the preservation of the Union into a war of abolition. Many agreed with Mr. Lincoln that if the Emancipation Proclamation had been issued in the early stages of the conflict it would have encompassed the loss of all the

border states and imperiled, if not defeated, the Union cause. When the tide of the conflict had reached its flood and the indomitable armies of the Confederacy were holding at bay the soldiers of the Union; when the fate of the nation hung upon the point of sword and bayonet, and disaster seemed not improbable to the Union cause, Mr. Lincoln resolved that military necessity existed for the emancipation of the slaves, and accordingly issued the proclamation. He instructed the cabinet when assembled to consider it, not to discuss the wisdom or propriety of the proclamation, but only its form and terms. On his own responsibility, after having attempted to determine in advance the social and political questions which freedom to the slaves would bring to the South, Mr. Lincoln acted without hesitation, and vindicated his claim to greatness. In no other way could slavery have been abol-

ished. In no other way could the present glory of the South have been made possible.

Abolitionists from the beginning of the war had denounced Mr. Lincoln for not taking this step. Now that he had issued the proclamation, from limit to limit of the country came loud protests, fierce denunciations. Meetings were held, inflammatory speeches made, bitter newspaper editorials published, and the emancipator was made an object of calumny.

In a letter to James C. Conkling of Springfield, Mr. Lincoln boldly sought to justify emancipation on the ground that it had become necessary to preserve the Union. He expressed confidence in the final triumph of the army and navy and appreciation of their achievements:

“The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great Northwest for it. Nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they met New England, Empire, Keystone and Jersey

hewing their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a helping hand.

“On the spot their part of the history is dotted down in black and white. The job was a great national one; and let none be barred who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who have cleared the Great River may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam’s Web Feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep seas, the broad bay and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp they have been—and made their tracks, thanks to all. For the Great Republic—for the principle it lives by and keeps alive—for man’s vast future, thanks to all”.

Such prophetic hopefulness manifested in spite of calumnies, conspiracies and bitter hatreds!

I have said that the South unanimously honors the memory of Mr. Lincoln because of his generosity and magnanimity in the hour of its desolation. There is yet another greater reason. Emancipation was far more necessary to the section immediately afflicted with slavery than any other. If slavery had continued, it would have made the poor white man's condition intolerable. It fostered an aristocracy of landowners, excluded the poor white man from opportunities of profitable labor, and barred to him the avenues of progress. At the outbreak of the war the total number of slave owners in the United States did not exceed 374,000. The remaining millions that constituted the white population of the South were compelled to earn their living by competition with slave labor. Aside from the idleness and arrogance which slavery cultivated, it created social and industrial condi-

tions among the whites repugnant to free institutions and inconsistent with the constitutional standard of personal liberty.

Throughout the war the primary responsibility for its conduct rested upon President Lincoln. His courage and his confidence were often tested. They never entirely failed. In the hours that followed Chancellorsville, the nation-broad shadow of despair approached him. The mistakes of Federal commanders in the field, the brilliant victories of the Confederate armies, were all blamed upon him. His enemies denounced Mr. Lincoln for not bringing the war to a speedy close. His friends were slow to assert what is now apparent. He was exhausting every constitutional power to encompass that end. His great heart followed the Union armies through disasters to final victory; out to where the grey lines dashed against the blue; where hearts throbbed like

drum beats; where battle clouds obscured the sun by day and flashing swords and glittering bayonets paled the gleam of stars by night; out to where the ranks closed above the fallen, where many a brave soldier sank to his last sleep charmed by dream melodies of childhood, lullabies that sounded above the clamor of conflict like hallelujahs of the redeemed above the noise of Hell!

May never again such a trial come to any man. May never again such strife disturb our land. If in the future it shall come, may there be found another who will use his power as resolutely, yet as mercifully as then did Abraham Lincoln.

As there was little hatred or bitterness between the soldiers of the North and the South, so Mr. Lincoln never expressed vindictiveness toward those engaged in the rebellion. How marvelous that he should never have yielded to

the spirit of revenge! With the weight of a war upon him, he was always accessible to the humblest citizen. He never turned a deaf ear to a plea for mercy. Throughout the four years of organizing, arming and maintaining vast armies; four years of marching and fighting such as until then the wars of earth had never known, this awkward, melancholy, charitable man never permitted an erring soldier to be wrongfully executed. Grey-haired parents, mothers with babes in their arms, young wives to whom love's caress was new, all seeking mercy for father, husband, lover, friend, found in him a patient auditor. The tramp of maddened armies, and the noise of battles could not drown their prayers for help.

At last it came to pass that peace was restored. Peace at what a price! What costly sacrifices of blood and fortunes! What sobs of anguish, what cries of pain! What a God-

send that Mr. Lincoln still lived and ruled! If another more vindictive and less charitable than he had then been President, the wounds of war might have never healed.

Mr. Lincoln was superstitious. He was a fatalist and believed in dreams. At certain periods of his life he was not orthodox in his religious views. Nevertheless, when at the head of the nation, he manifested unfaltering faith in God and in his Providence. He was endowed with a sense of humor, an appreciation of the ludicrous that relieved the gloom of his melancholy spirit, and relaxed the tension of his cares. No man ever used anecdotes to better advantage, yet many of his stories were too coarse for sensitive ears. He rarely mingled in society. Women had him at a disadvantage. His pathetic love for Ann Rutledge, his courtship of Mary Owen, her rejection of him and his unpardonable letter in reply, his

marriage to Mary Todd after having once absconded to avoid marrying her, are interesting incidents illustrative of his peculiar disposition. Reviewing his life now, one catches traces of queer characteristics. Yet, whatever the sidelights, the form of Mr. Lincoln looms gigantic. Through the years his love for "Little Tad", his constant companion and unfaltering friend, shines in undimmed splendor. His tragic death hastened the coming of the universal appreciation of his great achievements—the preservation of the republic and the destruction of slavery.

THE HALL OF FAME

Throughout history pre-eminently great men have rarely gathered in groups. They have usually appeared as solitary giants towering above the level of mediocrity, their shadows lengthening with time.

In our National Capitol between the Senate Chamber and the House of Representatives is Statuary Hall, consecrated to famous Americans. Visitors have access to this Temple of the Great, and, passing to and fro, gaze in wonderment and admiration at the bronze and marble likenesses adjudged to represent our best and greatest. Here Illinois has placed the figure of Abraham Lincoln, and Virginia has erected the statue of Robert E. Lee, reflecting the spirit of the new time, reconciliation and harmonious reunion never again to be disrupted. How marvelous that Lincoln should have counseled leniency and Lee should have urged submission to the flag of the Union, and that both should have found their way to places in our national Hall of Fame!

Students have consecrated a small arena to the deeds and memories of the great of earth, the master spirits of all ages. How few the

figures there! In the shadow realm that bounds the well defined arena in which are placed by common consent and shall forever stand the statues of the great, move the phantoms of those who have tried in vain to make their names immortal, but for whom opportunity and tales have not happily combined. Abraham Lincoln belongs in the select company of the world's renowned. Centuries of alternating progress and decline, social upheavals, industrial earthquakes and political revolutions may pile their dust about him. They can not entomb him. Mankind is his debtor. His deeds will endure.

Abraham Lincoln, humble, awkward patriot! To you it was given to perform a mighty service to your country and to all mankind. As the ages pass, your name will become more and more familiar. Today the citizens of this republic repeat the sentiment you uttered when

assuming the heaviest responsibility ever committed to man :

“We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break the bonds of our affection. The mystic chords of memory stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chords of the Union when touched again, as surely they will be, by the angels of our better nature”.

Abraham Lincoln! Your prayer has been answered. No thought or fear of civil conflict or disunion. Peace and abiding friendship among the states; freedom and progress the watchwords of all our people.

“Until the Future dares forget the Past

Your fate and fame shall be

An echo and a light

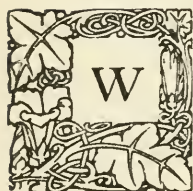
Unto Eternity”.



The President

of the Association, Introducing

Dr. Stephen S. Wise



WE have as our guest tonight a man born across the sea in the beautiful city of Budapest, but he is American, thoroughly American by instinct and by training. He never had any other country but America. Keenly interested in many phases of today's problems as founder and director, he thinks and speaks continentally.

A great Pacific coast city and a greater one on the Atlantic have been the scenes of his

labor, but his influence has reached from Portland to New York.

The charities and corrections conference of a great western state owes its inception to him. Child labor, the federated boys' clubs, the peace society, practical work for the immigrant, visiting nurses for the unfortunate poor, and for tubercular patients—these are but a few of his activities; and last, though not least, I must name the free synagogue in New York City founded by him and tended by him as pastor so tenderly, so loyally, so fearlessly, that it has become a great power for righteousness and for liberty. Gentlemen, Dr. Wise.





Lincoln: Man and
American
As delivered by
Dr. Stephen S. Wise



THE honoring invitation to give the address of tonight came to me as I was feasting upon the glad beauty of far-distant Venice. On the same day I had gone to one of the beautiful old churches facing St. Mark's and the Doge's palace across the Grand Canal. And there I looked at the grave of the great Doge or Duke Michael, for

whom one of the two matchless columns of the Piazza of St. Mark had been erected. On the tomb is written the words: "Here lies the terror of the Greeks. Whosoever thou art who comes to behold this tomb of his, bow thyself down before God because of him". As I stood this day at the tomb of Lincoln, those words recurred to my memory. But Lincoln was not the terror of the Greeks nor terror to any man. Yet we do well to bow ourselves down to God because of him, God's choicest gift to the American nation, America's first commoner.

This is the centenary of another great American, preacher and prophet, Henry Ward Beecher, and therefore I may fittingly refer to the word which he spoke at the death of Lincoln. Beecher said "Not Springfield's but Illinois', not Illinois' but the Nation's, not the nation's but the world's, is this man". Though

the name of Lincoln has become a world-wide treasure, how good it is for you to feel that he belongs not to the world but to America, not to America but to Illinois, not to Illinois but to Springfield, to you nearest and dearest of all; and, because he is nearest to you, his memory spells duty and high obligation and inescapable responsibility.

In explanation rather than in criticism of a great writer of another day, it was truly said,—Alas for the man who has no shrines! Doubly, trebly true is this of a nation, if it may truly be said that it has no shrines. America has many shrines. We have come to love and to honor many of the great and the good that have made the few years of our history splendid and commanding in the annals of human achievement. But surely there will be no dissenting from my thought that the two chiefest and holiest shrines of America are to be found on the bank

of the Potomac and within this city of Illinois, twin shrines for the American people, each of them reverently regarded and tenderly treasured.

What characterization of Lincoln could be more perfect than the word of Ecclesiasticus in which the latter describes the character and the life of another and earlier liberator: "And God brought out a man of mercy, a man beloved of God and man, whose memorial is blessed. He sanctified him in his faithfulness and meekness".

A man of mercy! Lincoln was that. Not only was he a man of mercy, but a man of infinite compassion. He was a strong man, a rugged man, a virile man, but such was his strength that it blossomed in unfailing mercy and compassion.

A man beloved of God and men! This was Abraham Lincoln. A man beloved of God,

whom God raised from among the simplest and the lowliest of the people to be a prince among men, and to be remembered reverently and tenderly long after the princes of the earth shall have been forgotten. A man loved of God and men! Men did not always love him; they did not always understand him. It was just before his passing, as the bearer of a martyr's crown, that men began to understand this man. But how men have loved him since! How the world has come to cherish him as its own! But it is all so obvious and inevitable. Lincoln was God's man, and God's man who can withstand?

His memorial is blest. What better proof than that we are gathered in this hour, as men are wont to gather at a shrine, in order to do homage to one of the two august memories of American history, the earlier memory, austere

and majestic, the later memory more human and kindly and benign.

Saint Beuve has said, "The glory of Bossuet has become one of the religions of France. We recognize it, we proclaim it, we honor ourselves by paying to it daily a new tribute". May we not say that the glory of Lincoln has become one of the religions of America,—a religion of the American people? The glory of Lincoln, who was more than President, more than statesman, more than martyr, is one of our religions. If we do not worship him, it is not, as Carlyle says, that "men worship the shows of great men; the most disbelieve that there is any reality of great men to worship", but because he is almost too great for our homage and too lofty for our praise. His glory is our religion. His memory is a consecration of American life.

It is well to emphasize every day, and more

than ever at such a time as this, that Lincoln is a religion in our land, lest some of us imagine that the railroad-dividend, or the yield of the mine or the harvest of the field, or the output of the factory, or the cash-book of the warehouse, is our religion. In the temple of deathless fame his memory is enshrined. We do not know whether his bust has been chosen to adorn a niche in the Hall of Fame on the University Heights in New York; if not, it is because he is Fame. His tomb at Springfield is not less sacred and precious than the grave at Mt. Vernon, each a revered shrine of the American people, each a hallowed altar of humanity.

Vindication of the American democracy,—we call this man of the people, simply sublime because sublimely simple. Let other nations boast of their achievements; we point to Lincoln, the man,—not unique, but uniquely

American, matchless the world over, but completely, robustly, sincerely American.

No miracle was he who was the inevitable product of the American people. Far greater than the seeming miracle of his life would have been the failure of America to bring forth a man equal to its supreme trial. Not by virtue of accident rose Lincoln to the place of liberator of a race and saviour of a nation. The mission came to the man because he was the man for the mission. The unutterable privilege of breaking the shackles from off millions of slaves had to come to Abraham Lincoln, because of the destiny of his character,—this man of rugged strength of character, uncompromising conscience, unspoiled simplicity of heart, blameless purity of soul, whose was the greatness of real goodness and the goodness of real greatness.

Turning for a moment to a foreign estimate

of Lincoln, which naturally is temperate and sober and in no sense perfervid, we find the French Democracy some years back casting a commemorative medal inscribed: "Lincoln,—honest man, abolished slavery, re-established the Union, saved the Republic". The "honest man" of the French characterization explains everything else. There is a direct and inevitable relation between "honest man" and all the rest. Great as were his achievements, the French people rightly felt that the man was even greater than his words. "Honest man" France names him; the negro race called him "Father Abraham",—a title infinitely more to be desired than "Conqueror", which is the portion of an Alexander or a Napoleon.

We are often reminded, and not without justice, that there is nothing supremely great in American art, or letters, that the contributions of America to the world's treasure-stores

are all material, such as the cotton-gin and the steam-press, the telegraph and steamboat, the telephone and harvester. If American letters have produced nothing superlatively great, we have something superlatively great to offer to history in the life of the founder of the Republic and in the life of him who was the saviour of the Nation and the restorer of our National Union. We point to Lincoln, the man. Beecher apostrophizes him as Illinois' gift to the Nation. Lowell glorifies him as the new birth of our new soil,—the first American. Emerson sees that he is an heroic figure at the centre of an heroic epoch. Wendell Phillips proudly hails him as the natural growth of democratic institutions. And Phillips Brooks honors him with a name above every other that he might have asked,—this best and most American of all Americans.

Lincoln was the most American of Ameri-

cans. It cannot truly be said that Lincoln was not a type. God help us if Lincoln be not a type, if it be true that he stands alone, without fellows, without ancestors and without successors. His ancestors were Cromwell and Hampden, Hancock and Adams, Washington and Franklin. His ancestry was the Magna Charta and the Declaration of Independence. Among his forerunners were Garrison, John Brown, Theodore Parker; Lincoln himself was just and generous enough to say of his forerunners, the intrepid Abolitionists, that their moral power had enabled him to do all.

Lincoln was chosen out of all the people,—the great American commoner, plain man of the people, as Emerson first styled him. To be the first man of a people in a land where every citizen is king is to be the manliest of men and the kingliest of kings,—king by divine right, by the divinest of rights,—the right of man-

hood and worth and character. Is it not the very Paladium of our liberty that the commoner, the homespun man, may rise to the highest station in the land? Is it not the inspiration of our youth and the pride of our manhood that the commoner, speaking for his kind, voiced the abiding truth: Government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth?

As one thinks of the two shrines of American history, and to these others will be added in the years that are to come, how are they confounded who declare that the people whom Lincoln trusted cannot even now be completely trusted! How often have we erred in the one hundred and thirty years of American history in the matter of choosing the Chief Magistrate of the nation? Not once have we chosen badly. What kingdom or empire of the earth has done as well? Within seventy-

five years this nation chose two men as President of the United States who are to stand among the world's immortals,—Washington and Lincoln within one century! Match that in all the centuries of the earth's kingdoms and empires. What European nation has had two rulers from 1789 to this hour who compare in moral and spiritual stature with these two giants of a giant continent?

Lincoln the man is at one and the same time the vindication of the American democracy and of the dignity and nobleness of the common people from whom he was sprung. He proved anew that the uncommonest men and women rise out of the ranks of the so-called common people.

How the memory of Lincoln rebukes the pettily arrogant and the meanly proud, who disdain and even abhor the common people because they are not nice nor yet refined nor

yet cultivated! Lincoln was not nice; he was simple, rough, uncouth, elemental, himself. He never talked very much about democracy or the common people because he was one of them. In the mind and speech of Lincoln, the people were never "They" but always "We". Lincoln was saved from the unguineness of a lip-philanthropy by his common sense, his most uncommon sense of humor, his utterly democratic spirit.

Sprung from the people and trusting in the people, the people trusted and loved him. "They who trust us, educate us". They alone distrust the people who are not worthy of a people's trust. Let not a man of the people who trusts and would serve them, who dares to speak of the duties of the strong and the rights of the weak, be derided as a demagogue. For Lincoln was a man of the people,—not a blatant demagogue, not a democrat on parade, but

so democratic, so firmly trusting in the people that the immortal watchword that he gave to the nation was the necessary expression of the fundamental democracy of faith and life of him "whose genuine love of the people no one could suspect of being either the cheap flattery of the demagogue or the abstract philanthropy of the philosopher". As one reviews the life of Lincoln, the prophet of democracy, one is moved to say that no man has the right to call himself a democrat who distrusts the people, who is fearful of entrusting the people with plenary power, who is afraid that the popular rights movement has "gone too far". Lincoln trusted the common people with less reason for faith than have we. We have every reason to trust the people, which moved him to place his trust in them, and one besides, Lincoln himself,—the common people incarnate in this type man.

Democracy means not the eternal sounding of futile shibboleths, such as state rights,—too often an apology for a state of wrong,—but the application of fundamental political principles to the working out of the problems of American life and American welfare. Democracy is to be something more than the pose of a hungry office-hunting minority or majority; it is to be the genuine conviction of a vast majority, not the slogan of a party, but the ideal of the whole nation.

Lincoln came of a race of pioneers, of men who dared to the very verge of their being. We, too, in our day must pioneer as did Lincoln in his,—not rashly adventurous but bravely daring in the enterprises of the soul. Rash and fool-hardy were deemed the pioneers of a century ago. In truth, they adventured much, but only they were rash and fool-hardy who little esteemed the pioneers and appraised

them low. Pioneers must we be in the new world of our making and of our re-creating, with the qualities of the pioneers who, above all, were the soldiers of the common weal. Not pioneering for themselves, for he is no pioneer who would serve himself alone, but pioneers merely that we may occupy the outposts of new realms of the spirit and new regions of achievement to be peopled and to be blessed by the generations for which we shall have prepared the way as Lincoln prepared the way for us gathered to do him homage.

In a very real sense, Lincoln was prophetic of that which is yet to be, prophetic of the new religion, though he knew it not, prophetic of the religion of Abraham and Moses and Jesus and Lincoln,—the religion which is summarized in the words,—Love of God and love of neighbor.

Lincoln was prophetic in yet another sense,

for he was the foreseer of the newer and truer democracy. He struck a deadly blow at that most terrible of all castes, the caste of race. If we are to be true to his memory, we must strike other and telling blows at every vestige of the false idolatry of caste and rank. Democracy is not an institution to be created nor a structure to be established nor even an ideal to be realized. More unsubstantial, withal more vital and perduring than all of these, be it not forgotten that democracy is the attitude of the common mind, that it is the aspiration of the commonalty.

Lincoln fulfilled the idea laid down in the holy writ for the governance of those who are to choose judges and rulers of the people: "Moreover, thou shalt choose out of all the people men of strength, such as fear God, men of truth, hating their own gain".

Men of strength were the judges and rulers

to be! He was a man of that moral strength which is the noblest courage,—strong enough to dare to be in the right and to do the right though he must needs stand alone. Let us not forget his strength, who was as strong as he was simple, not only strong enough to carry on a mighty war to a triumphant close, but strong enough to oppose an unjust war, even though waged by his country. So strong was he that, refusing to be goaded on by his friends and unafraid of his foes, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation at the right hour, when it was destined to achieve the greatest good. Man of strength was he who, three days before his assassination, gave voice to the guiding rule of his life: “Important principles may and must be inflexible”; who, in his Cooper Union address, delivered himself of the almost prophetic burden: “Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to

the end dare to do our duty as we understand it”.

Such as fear God! Fearless before man, Abraham Lincoln feared God. Lip-piety was not of the substance of his religion, nor was he given to many professions of faith, but he walked in the fear of God. Not only was he a profoundly religious man, the content of whose life was rooted in religion, whose religion flowered in the beauty of the good and the true, but his was a conscious faith in a supreme purpose. Almost might one say in paraphrase of the word of Schiller, that the churches were not religious enough to command his allegiance. The question touching his day is not so much whether Lincoln was a churchman, but whether the churches of his time were Lincoln-like. Only to a God-fearing man could have come the inspiration with which he closed his second inaugural address: “With

malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in". Such fear of God is a nation's strength.

Men of truth! Scorning to tell a lie and lover of truth, this man who could not stoop to think or to speak a lie, was little likely to act or to live a lie. Compromise and time-serving were strangers to his vocabulary. Wise but not fearful, circumspect but not compromising, careful but unafraid was he. Nothing could be unfairer than to think of Lincoln, as is sometimes done, as if he had been a man of political cunning, lacking in intellectual stability and moral courage. He was open-minded, but he was sturdily self-reliant. He was intellectually receptive, but always self-contained, even as he was a man of the people though never common. Carl Schurz tells that in the first Springfield legislature in which he

sat, he recorded his protest against a pro-slavery resolution, though followed by only one other man. So did he love truth and scorn a lie that when he was warned in advance against the consequences of his Springfield address, he silenced his timid friends with the unforgettable words: "It is true, and I will deliver it as written".

Hating their own gain! Self-seeking was far from him and the quest after gain of any kind was unthinkable in this lover of his country. He was not a President with a conscience, but he was conscience incarnate in a President. He hated the gain of the people's praise, even the gain of such popular good-will as would bring about his re-election, unless such gain could be had without the sacrifice of self-respect. He was a statesman who pleaded ever for truth and never for victory. He would have shared Lowell's scorn for the party which

builds a platform as a bridge to victory and not, one might add, as a refuge for truth. The people could not flatter him, politicians could not frighten him, riches could not purchase him, ambition could not unsteady him, power could not dazzle him, who served his conscience as his king, who "held his steadfast way like the sun across the firmament".

Rightly was it said of Lincoln that his was a character such as only freedom knows how to make. If our democracy become polluted by the taint of caste, it will produce no Abraham Lincolns. Lincoln fought not so much slavery as the thing which made it possible,—the feudal spirit of caste of which negro slavery was only the most abhorrent symptom. It was a noble prophecy of a tribune of the people, George William Curtis, that the part assigned to this country in the good fight of man is the total overthrow of the spirit of caste. It is a

far cry from the riotous opposition to the appearance of a coat-of-arms, in the late thirties of the last century, on the carriage of a rich New York family, to the title-hunting mothers and fathers of our own day, who prefer the purchase of some negligible dukelet or paltry princeling to the best of men, if so be he bear no prouder title than that of fellow-American of Abraham Lincoln.

We need today, be it said in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, not a new South but a true South,—a South that shall be true to itself, true to the Union and true to the principles of true democracy, a South that shall not have the name of democracy upon its lips and despotism in its heart. One thing is certain,—that the way not to prepare the negro for citizenship is the way in large part of the South which denies to the negro the right to a complete education, which grants him little more than the

shreds and scraps of a rudimentary education that is not worthy of the name. Unless Lincoln's work is to have been done in vain, the South must not fix upon servitude without chains as the abiding portion of the negro race.

Lincoln has conferred a new dignity upon labor, but the new dignity of labor must include larger dignity and fuller life for the toiler. If it be true, as Lincoln said, that to secure to each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government, then children should cease to toil, then Northern capital shall cease to enslave the children of the South, then women must not be overworked and under-paid, must not be driven into shame from shop and store and factory by a starvation wage, then man must have a larger and larger share of the fruits of his labor. If we are to do Lincoln's work, we must enfranchise all men,

and first of all ourselves, into that glorious liberty of the sons of God which has been appointed to us, that we, the citizens of the American democracy, may be the emancipators of untold millions for all time.

Not very long ago I was invited to purchase a volume purporting to set forth the genealogy of Lincoln. The price of the volume was to be ten dollars, something more than the value of the house in which Lincoln was born. The descent of Lincoln is of very little importance by the side of the question,—how shall we avert a descent from Lincoln? What can we do in order to ascend to the heights on which he stood? This Lincoln commemoration from year to year will be of little value unless, in the spirit of the Gettysburg address, we make it tell by dedicating ourselves anew to the things for which he lived and died. The important thing today is not what we say of Lincoln but

what Lincoln would say of us if he were here in this hour and could note the drift and tendency in American life and American politics. Are we true to him, are we loyal to his memory?

Edmund Burke once said that during the reign of the kings of Spain of the Austrian family, whenever they were at a loss in the Spanish Councils, it was common for their statesmen to say that they ought to consult the genius of Phillip II. We dwell in times of great perplexity and are beset by far-reaching problems of social, industrial and political import. We shall not greatly err if upon every occasion we consult the genius of Abraham Lincoln. We shall not falter nor swerve from the path of national righteousness if we live by the moral genius of the great American commoner.

Instead of following Lincoln, we too often

strive to make it appear that he is following us. Instead of emulating him we too often venture to appropriate him. Instead of sitting at his feet as his disciples, and humbly heeding the echoes of his lips, we attribute to him our own petty slogans. The truth is that Lincoln belongs to no party today, though in his time he stood well and firmly within party ranks. His spirit ought today to inform all parties. He was a partisan second, an American first, as he is the first of Americans. Men and measures must not claim him for their own. He remains the standard by which to measure men. His views are not binding upon us, but his point of view will always be our inspiration. He would not be blindly followed who was open-minded and open-visioned. He did not solve all the problems of the future, but he did solve the problem of his own age. Ours it is

not to claim his name for our standards but his aim as our standard.

Lincoln is become for us the test of human worth, and we honor men in the measure in which they approach the absolute standard of Abraham Lincoln. Other men may resemble and approach him; he remains the standard whereby all other men are measured and appraised. Gibbon tells us that two hundred and fifty years after the death of Trajan the Senate, in calling out the customary acclamation on the accession of an Emperor, wished that he might surpass the felicity of Augustus and the virtue of Trajan. *Melior Trajano*,—better than Trajan! Such a standard is Lincoln become for us, save that we dare not hope that any American may serve his country better than did Lincoln. However covetous of honor for our country we may be, we cherish no higher hope for the land we love than that

the servants of the Republic in all time may rise to the stature of Abraham Lincoln.

In his lifetime Lincoln was maligned and traduced, but detraction during a man's lifetime affords no test of his life's value nor offers any forecast of history's verdict. It would almost seem as if the glory of immortality were anticipated in the life of the great by detraction and denial whilst yet they lived. When a Lincoln-like man arises, let us recognize and fitly honor him. There could be no poorer way of honoring the memory of Lincoln than to assume, as we sometimes do, that the race of Lincolns has perished from the earth, and that we shall never look upon his like again. One way to ensure the passing of the Lincolns is to assume that another Lincoln can nevermore arise. Would we find Lincoln today, we must not seek him in the guise of a rail-splitter, nor as a wielder of the backwoodsman's axe, but as

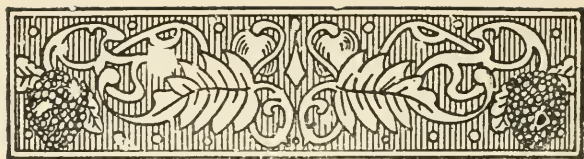
a mighty smiter of wrong in high places and low.

Not very long ago I chanced upon a rarely beautiful custom in the city of Florence. It was the day of the martyrdom "of a prophet sent by God". A multitude stood before the spot where he was done to death,—his hands miraculously uplifted in blessing in the very moment of torture and death,—and every man brought a rose petal in token of reverence and gratitude to the martyred soul. This day every American citizen, every American man and woman and child has in spirit brought a petal to the grave of Lincoln, who sleeps tonight beneath a wilderness of love-tokens from men of all faiths and tongues and races and backgrounds,—who are become one and indivisible in their love and honor for the memory of Abraham Lincoln.

I have sometimes thought that the noblest

tribute paid to the memory of Lincoln was the word of Phillips Brooks in Westminster Abbey when, pointing out that the test of the world to every nation was,—Show us your man,—he declared that America names Lincoln. But the first word spoken after the death of Lincoln is truest and best,—the word of Secretary of War Stanton, standing by the side of that scene of peace,—“Now he belongs to the ages”. It was verdict and prophecy alike, for Lincoln is not America’s, he is the world’s; he belongs not to our age, but to the ages; and yet, though he belongs to all time and to all peoples, he is our own, for he was an American.

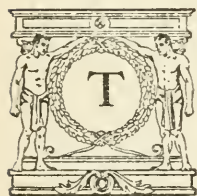




The President

of the Association, Introducing

Mr. Percival Graham Rennick



THE good city of Peoria is rich in varied products. Among other things she produces spirits. She has furnished us for this occasion her most attractive sample.

He is not a neutral spirit. Amid the cares of responsible official duties, he finds time for much literary work. Those of us who know him are always glad to hear him for he is one of the sweetest spirits of Illinois. Gentlemen, Mr. Rennick.



Lincoln: The Kindliest Memory of the Land

Honorable Percival G. Rennick



R. CHAIRMAN, Ladies and
Gentlemen: Patriotic hearts
have been warmed and quick-
ned by countless eulogies whose
themes have been, The Martyred
President, The Great Emancipator, The Rail-
Splitter of Illinois. And though his body has
rested in the tomb for nearly fifty years, his

spirit still lives, and his name remains powerful to sway the hearts of men. Lincoln lived to save a nation, and it may be that through celebrations in his memory a loyal legion shall be aroused who will preserve that which he saved.

We realize that we are in his old home, and in the presence of men who were his neighbors and friends, and loved him and appreciated him. We know that there are many here assembled who, with keen comprehension of men and governmental affairs, have diligently studied his life and character, and bow the lower, the more they study, to his greatness and kindness.

So we, who cannot claim the honor of having been born while Lincoln yet lived, can hardly find an impulse to speak of aught else than the impressions received, the lessons learned from the story of his life, and the love

that lingers around that hallowed name, the kindliest memory of the land.

Above a busy harbor of an old seaport, there stood a mighty beacon light that shone with such tremendous power that it made bright the whole sky. It had been placed there to guide all craft, both large and small, through the perilous waters into the channels that led to safe moorings. And to those who have sought liberty and freedom, the man who freed a people and saved a nation, has been as this beacon to the craft that sailed the sea. Yes, from the higher heavens his character, his deeds, his kindness, have made a light to guide, not only the people of America, but the people of all lands who love liberty and would be free.

I recall how, in the early days of this country when men were finding their way across the plains and over the ranges, the leader of a pioneer party climbed a rugged mountain side

to gain a better view and determine the path to take. And in my fancy I could see this leader as a tall, strong man, with bronzed cheek and powerful form. I could see him starting on the common level of the plains and climbing up and up, hand over hand; planting his feet on the jagged rocks; digging deep his fingers into the solid places; gaining strength by each succeeding grasp; never faltering, but going steadily upward until he reached the summit. Then with uplifted form, he breathed the pure air of the mountain-top and surveyed the plains below. He could see far and marveled at the greatness of the plain. And from that lofty eminence he saw more greatness in the plain than from the plain, he thought the mountain-top possessed. But as he stood there in his strength, he was not vain of his achievement. He was thinking only of the use he might make of that eminence to find out a safe

path for the people whom he led—to search out, if he might, the dangers and barriers to avoid. He had known those plains before, but he knew them better now because of the new view.

Then in this man I seemed to see the Lincoln who ever sought to lead his people in the right path and to keep all from danger. He was truly a pioneer path finder. He started on the common level of the plain citizenship to climb the mountain-side of usefulness to his kind. We see him in his ruggedness, bronzed by the winds and the sun of God's out-of-doors; angular, but poised and strong; strong by work and wholesome play; strong in mind and heart and soul; going on and up the difficult way. We see him placing his feet where they would not slip, and digging deep his fingers into the solid places; gaining strength as he climbed. He faltered not, but with a purpose and pre-

paredness he kept on until he gained the summit. Then with clear eyes he looked out over the plain below. He had known those plains before, but he marveled at them now and what they meant to government and civilization. He vaunted not at his great climb. Not the least vanity or self-congratulation was there. He was thinking of how he might better lead his people. With intense gaze he was searching out a safe path. He was trying to discern the barriers and dangers, nearby and in the distance. He was trying to satisfy his innermost soul as to the right way to guide the people whom he led and loved. Yes, he was a mighty path-finder; and he not only found the way from the plain to the mountain-top, but marked the common trail of life, so that the humblest may find the way if he will. He marked the trail that has been closely studied by the humble and the high, the peasant and the king, and

up which those who would honestly serve their kind are climbing now, reading his guide book by the light of good conscience and patriotic desire.

Yet, while in sentiment we may see him as a great beacon light of the liberty-loving world, his deeds and character shining out across the seas to teach the ruler and the ruled the necessity of individual rights and political liberty, and while we may see him as the fearless pathfinder, leading the way, when we see plainly and study deeply, we find him on no mountain-top. We see him as no heaven born leader, but as a great man—a great man who led because he was the greatest among the people whom he led. It was not necessary for him to climb to any eminence to be able to see the path, because he was so high of vision, so high of heart and soul. He walked on the plain level, shoulder to shoulder and hand to hand with the mul-

titude, and yet so high he was he could see over the heads of all and down among the concourse of people with whom he marched and whom he led by sheer force of his bigness.

He was the greatest product of a great race. He was, indeed, "The Samson of the Pioneers". And all of them were strong men. Strong as they were, they believed in and respected the rights of others. They believed in the government of self as well as in self government. Those old pioneers and their fathers gave us about all we have in government that is substantial and enduring. They may be called old-fashioned by some sages who worry because they arrived too late to help create the world, yet they came into a wilderness and with bare hands, in less than half a lifetime, built a veritable paradise. They probably never heard of marriage by means of a doctor's prescription, but they builded so well that all

the evil passions let loose by internecine war could not tear down what they built. It was among such people that Abraham Lincoln first gained leadership. He was not a leader among weak men; he was a great leader among strong men.

We find in the history of America and sister nations other men of giant mind and sturdy character; other men possessing power and leadership; other men with constructive genius who helped build States and taught the equality of all men under the law; other men who rose to eminence and renown. But Lincoln possessed not only all these attributes, but back of them all, and under them all, and over them all, and mingled with them all, he had a force that transcends the might of giants, the power of kings or the wisdom of the wise. It was that which mingles in the mind with the memory of the laughter of little children at play, the

song of the birds in the trees, the goodnight kiss and gentle pat of baby days, a child's prayer, manhood's love, the warm hand-clasp of true friendship; and that is kindness. O, such wonderful kindness he showed in every thought and deed! That was the gift from heaven that put the gold into his life, making powerful all his other faculties. That was the light behind, which made his other great qualities stand out in bold relief. If all men possessed such kindness, tears would be shed only in excess of joy; no injustice would be done; the strong would protect rather than crush; all men would be friends, and the problems of government would be solved.

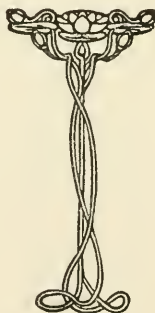
There are many lessons that every citizen may learn from the story of his life. We can learn from him because he was so common, and yet so great. He was a mighty common man, and mighty because of that vantage

ground. So rugged and yet so gentle, so strong and yet so tender. His heart bled for every boy who died fighting for the flag, and his spirit shook with woe when he thought of the darkened homes each battle made; and yet he faltered not in his duty to the nation, nor in his endeavor to drive treason from the land, to bring victory to the Union and peace to the people. He was brave enough and kind enough to face the bitter storm to bring home a stray sheep, or with bare hands to tear asunder the wolf's jaws to liberate a lamb.

Where liberty drives ignorance from the mind and warms into being a free man, the name of Lincoln shall ever live and be a principle, a blessing and a guide. His story has been told in every land where men long to be free.

Creed nor cant, blood nor birth, poverty nor riches, humbleness nor height, land nor

language, are barriers to the love and reverence that men have in their hearts for this champion of liberty and right. Our admiration for his giant mind and soul; our tears for his sorrow, our love and a song for his gentle, kindly life.







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